

**TULARE COUNTY WATER COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
January 12, 2015**

**Members Present:**

Allen Ishida, Board Representative and Chairman  
Mark Larsen, District 3 Appointee  
Richard L. Schafer, District 5 Appointee  
Dale Brogan, District 2 Appointee  
Paul Boyer, District 1 Appointee  
Rudy Mendoza, TCAG Representative  
Chris Kapheim, District 4 Appointee  
Mike Ennis, Board Alternate Representative  
Roger Everett, At-Large Appointee

**Members Absent:**

Susana De Anda, At-Large Appointee

**Staff Present:**

Julieta Martinez, Tulare County Board of Supervisors  
Denise England, County Administrative Office  
Will Jackson, County Counsel

**Members of the Public Present:**

Carole Clum  
Nilsa Gonzalez  
Kim Loe  
Pat Pinkham  
Michael Hickey  
Carole Combs  
W. Dale Sally  
Richard Garcia

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:03pm.

2. Public Comment Period

Carole Clum of Three Rivers provided the Commissioners with two handouts from High County News. She also provided them with a UC Davis document entitled Protecting Groundwater Quality in Citrus Production. Please see attachment for comments.

Carol Combs, Executive Director from the Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners shared that back in April of 2013, the Commission was briefed on the Tulare Basin Watershed Initiative which received a grant in the amount of \$300,000. That grant is now complete. She shared that they were able to build relationships with that collaboration and their efforts will be continued in the Tulare Lake Basin. She also mentioned one great benefit which was the increase of funding to the region. She provided staff, Denise England, with a copy of the summary.

3. Approval of November 10, 2014 minutes

Commissioner Schafer provided Staff, Julieta Martinez, with proposed changes to the minutes. Motion made by Commissioner Kapheim second by Commissioner Mendoza. Motion approved.

4. Presentation by Chris Kapheim on NTC Regional Surface Water Treatment Plant Study

Commissioner Kapheim gave a brief overview of the NTC Regional Surface Water Treatment Plant Study. He discussed various water demands by the Cutler Public Utilities District (PUD), Oroshi PUD, Sultana PUD, and more. Oroshi is reevaluating options and moving toward surface water. They need about 2300 acre/feet to meet the regional water supply demand.

He stated that there are various agreements that still need to be worked out. There will be a transfer agreement with the Friant-Kern Canal. There is not currently a means to put Kings-River water in the Friant-Kern Canal, except a contractual agreement by the Boswell Company. As far as Friant-Kern Maintenance down-time there is existing compliant groundwater wells that would be used to satisfy the total water usage during this period. The total well capacity from the Cutler PUD, Oroshi PUD, and Yettem is 2,920GPM. The winter period peak flow rate is estimated to be 2,300GPM.

Agreements for pipeline alignments are part of the process that probably should have been done before. That part was delayed but that will start in March.

The treatment plant costs are pro-rated. A cost of 13 million dollars is established to build the treatment plant. The Pipelines costs are pro-rated as well with a project total of over 10 million dollars. The annual operation annual and maintenance costs are estimated to be 983 thousand dollars. That is a heavy cost that will continue from this point on. As far as Water supply cost. They have looked at what the actual banking costs are. These are hard costs. Every 19 years they get into a scenario where they get into those crucial years. There are maintenance and transportation costs. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Kapheim stated that the long term goal is to be ready if funding were to become available so that they can get the entire project constructed or as much as possible and address these drinking water issues on the East side.

Commissioner Boyer asked if the amounts provided include all project costs associated with maintenance, construction, etc.

Commissioner Kapheim shared that it did include all costs including operational costs. Commissioner Schafer asked if the water supply would be allocated by Alta Irrigation District.

Commissioner Kapheim responded that they would also work with the Bureau of Reclamation and Friant Water Authority for use of the Friant-Kern Canal. He also shared that the public can find the full study on the Alta Irrigation District website. Discussion followed.

## 5. Subcommittee Reports (Discussion Item)

Denise England met with a couple of stakeholder from the Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District and there is tentative date in February to engage more stakeholders.

Commissioner Kapheim stated that they are looking at how to address the issues of sustainability. In their case, he believes there is a lot of confusion. People are just now beginning to learn about what will potentially be required. They are told that Agriculture will have major impacts due to costs and the governance of the process.

Commissioner Mendoza asked if the County or other agency has some type of fact sheet or document with guidelines concerning this act.

Denise England responded that they had not yet done so. She did share that there will be a Groundwater Workshop by CSAC on February 4<sup>th</sup> in the Edison Building in Tulare, CA. There will be panelists from Kern, Tulare, and Kings Counties presenting and addressing questions related to the act.

Commissioner Larsen added that the workshop is by invitation only. The focus is on entities like county and city staff, etc. gearing the discussion towards them with a narrow agenda. Kaweah Delta is having a workshop for landowners on Feb. 11 at 9am at the heritage during the World Ag Expo. The goal there is educational informing people about the new act and local options concerning agriculture.

Chairman Ishida asked if we had all the nuts and bolts as far as regulations to know what we need to comply with.

Commissioner Kapheim shared that the information would not be completed until 2016.

Commissioner Larsen stated that part of the challenge is that the information provided is very general. The State Board and the Department of Water Resources must narrow down to specifics and what they are looking for. DWR has assigned new staff to specifically focus on this. There has been efforts with groups like ACWA and California Water Foundation to suggest to the State how to go about the details in a reasonable way. He shared that there are efforts to clean up language in the legislation and streamline the adjudication process.

Commissioner Brogan asked what the County is doing to cover the white areas of the County that are not necessarily covered by irrigation districts. He has already received questions by some landowners who are trying to figure out if the County will cover those areas or if new districts will be formed.

Chairman Ishida stated that it is his hope that the County set up meetings with people in the white areas to let them know what is going on and how can we, as a County, facilitate meeting the requirements of the act. Discussion followed.

## 6. Staff Reports

Denise England provided the Commission with an update on drought conditions in Tulare County. She shared that there is a weekly update on the web page listed on the handout. There was also a map that listed the location of dry wells.

## 7. Commissioners Comments

Chairman Ishida shared that he had been approached last week in regards to a regulatory grazing project. It appears the Water Board is looking at some type of regulatory procedure. He felt that it did not have a lot of support but mentioned that it has failed to stop the Board in the past. Commissioner Schafer felt that the project was unnecessary. He stated it was a part of continued state regulations and suggested the County do whatever possible to oppose it.

Commissioner Kapheim showed interest in the subject and Chairman Ishida suggested trying to contact Water Board staff to possibly present on the matter in the near future.

## 8. Next meeting – Monday, February 9, 2015, 3:00 p.m. – Board of Supervisors Chambers

## 9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:06pm.